

At the meeting of the Public Service Commission of the State of Montana held at the Commission's Offices in Helena, Montana, on Tuesday, March 16, 2004, the following members were present:

Bob Rowe, Chairman
Thomas J. Schneider, Vice Chairman
Matt Brainard, Commissioner
Greg Jergeson, Commissioner
Jay Stovall, Commissioner

APPEARANCE

Dave Burchett
Utility Division

(92) In the matter of NorthWestern Energy - Docket No. D96.2.22 Order No. 5898h: On March 1, 2004, NorthWestern Energy (NWE) filed a request to collect \$819,915 which NWE over credited to customers. NWE proposes to collect this amount by reflecting it as an offset in the CTC-GP-Credit, which was originally used to give customers the Sales Proceeds Credit beginning in February 2001. The CTC-GP-Credit is analyzed as part of the CTC-GP-RA Credit annual adjustment filing which will be made in March and have an April 1, 2004 effective date. Commission approval will allow NWE to collect this balance over a one-year period, however, the balance will be monitored and collection will stop at the time the balance is fully exhausted.

Commissioner Schneider moved to deny the request without prejudice as to any future filings. Commissioner Stovall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE

Eric Eck
Utility Division

(93) In the matter of Energy West Inc. - Docket No. D2004.3.30: On March 1, 2004, EW filed an application seeking approval of a credit agreement between EW and LaSalle Bank National Association and approval of additional liens to the trustees for holders of EW's long-term debt. The Company's current line of credit requires the Company to refinance \$8,000,000 of the currently authorized \$23,000,000 to reduce the maximum credit under the current line of credit to \$15,000,000. \$6,000,000 will be converted to a senior term loan which will have a five-year term. \$2,000,000 will be a bridge facility which must be refinanced in six months with that amount of new equity. A default order has been drafted.

Commissioner Jergeson moved to approve the credit agreement. Commissioner Brainard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE

Wayne Budt, Administrator
Transportation/Centralized Services Division

(94) In the matter of the approval of Commission Minutes; Commissioner Stovall moved to approve the Commission Minutes for the week of March 8, 2004. Commissioner Schneider seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE
Martin Jacobson
Legal Division

(95) In the matter of the Commission's discussion of Western Wireless Application for ETC in Montana nonrural (Qwest) area - Docket No. D2003.1.14:

Commissioner Schneider moved to approve Western Wireless counsel to appear pro hac vice at the hearing. Commissioner Brainard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE
David Burchett
Utility Division

(96) In the matter of the Commission's discussion of NWE Storage Reporting - Docket No. D2003.6.66:

Commissioner Schneider moved to suspend NWE reporting of natural gas storage activity with reports to be resumed when storage resumes. Commissioner Jergeson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE
Al Brogan
Legal Division

(97) In the matter of the Commission's discussion of NWE Bankruptcy:

Commissioner Brainard moved to close the session for purposes of litigation strategy. Commissioner Stovall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting was adjourned.

BOB ROWE, Chairman

THOMAS J. SCHNEIDER, Vice Chairman

MATT BRAINARD, Commissioner

GREG JERGESON, Commissioner

JAY STOVALL, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Connie Jones
Commission Secretary

(SEAL)